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COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY.

A brief narrative of the recent work of grace, and of the course of religious instruction, in the College of New Jersey. Extracted from the Report of the President to the Trustees, and published at their request;—submitted June 24th, 1856.

Of the two hundred and fifty-three students in the College, during the present year, eighty-six are members of the Church, in full communion; and it is expected that not less than twenty others will make, before long, a public profession of their faith in Christ. Several purpose to do so at the first opportunity afforded them. Of those now in the communion of the Church, seventeen have become communicants within the present college year. Besides those just spoken of, and in regard to whom, we indulge the hope, that they are pious, there are many others who have been deeply impressed with the importance of divine things; and who, we trust, are to be brought to a saving knowledge of the truth.

In this connexion it will be proper for me to make mention of the work of grace, which, in the kind providence of God, we have been permitted to witness among the youth of our College, during the present term. While at home in the previous vacation, two of the students made a profession of their faith; and a few others became more or less interested in the subject of religion.

On Thursday, the 28th of February, the day observed as a day of prayer for Colleges, we had religious services, both in the afternoon and in the evening. These services were well attended; and they were unusually solemn. It was evident that a deep impression had been made upon the minds of many. In the afternoon addresses were made by the Rev. Dr. Carnahan and the Rev. Dr. Hodge; and they were listened to with devout at-



tention. In the evening, the exercises were conducted by the President of the College, and the number of students present was unusually large.

These circumstances encouraged us to hope that God was about to revive his work, and grant us a season of refreshing. In this expectation we were not disappointed. It was soon apparent that a work of grace was begun. Not only were the members of the Faculty greatly encouraged, and active in promoting the good work, but the pious students were much engaged in efforts to interest the minds of their fellow students in the subject of their spiritual and eternal welfare. From the beginning of the work to the present time, there have been religious services in the Sophomore recitation room every evening in the week, with the exception of Sabbath evening. These services were conducted by the President and Professors of the College, aided occasionally by the Professors of the Seminary and other friends. To Dr. Hodge we are particularly indebted for his valuable assistance so often and so willingly given.

For fifteen years or more, religious services had been held on the evenings of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, in each week of the session; but during the present session we have had them every evening, with the exception of Sabbath evening, as above mentioned. The reason for not meeting on that evening was this, that there were always, on that evening, religious services in the First Presbyterian Church.

Throughout the whole session the meetings have been well attended, both by the members of the Faculty and by the students. The exercises were singing, prayer, reading of Scripture, exposition of Scripture and the explanation of some doctrine or duty. The Tutors and the students frequently took part in prayer. On every Sabbath morning, for many years, the students have held a prayer meeting in the Sophomore recitation room; and this meeting has been regularly attended by some of the officers of the College. Meetings for prayer and the reading of Scripture were held frequently, during the session, in the rooms of the students. At these more private meetings, Professor Duffield was often present and took part in them. For thirty years the

pious students have held a meeting for prayer and conference, on every Saturday evening. Opportunities for conversation on the subject of religion were not only afforded to such students as desired to have instruction; but, in many cases, they were visited in their rooms; and in others, they were sent for to our houses, that we might be able to converse with them in private, pray with them, and give them such counsel as we thought to be suited to their several states of mind.

Our religious services, though daily, do not appear to have been burdensome. Care was taken not to have them protracted. Our aim was to limit them to thirty or forty minutes, and to present whatever topics were handled in as few words as would suffice to give a distinct and deep impression of the truth sought to be imparted. In our teachings we have endeavored to bring home to the hearts of our pupils their depravity by nature, their helplessness, their lost and ruined condition; but more especially their obligations to God, for his love, grace and condescension; their absolute dependence for salvation upon the grace of God; the righteousness of Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit. In this manner we laboured to interest them in the vital truths of religion, and to bring them to the exercise of repentance toward God, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to a consciousness of their entire dependence upon the Spirit of grace and truth, for all right feeling, and for all saving knowledge.

While there has been a marked earnestness on the part of many, in seeking forgiveness and acceptance with God; there has also been perfect sobriety of deportment, upon the part of all, whether professors of religion or inquirers after the truth. Never have I seen things more quietly conducted; and seldom with equally happy results. For while there has been much to rejoice our hearts, and for which we desire to be ever grateful to our Heavenly Father, there have been no excesses to deplore. True, indeed, all who were impressed have not given evidence of being born again, and some of them doubtless are as careless as ever; yet there has been no such re-action as is sometimes witnessed after great excitement on the subject of religion. We hope, too, that many, who manifest no deep concern for their

spiritual welfare, have nevertheless received into their hearts the seeds of divine truth, which are yet to spring up and to bring forth fruit to the glory of God, and to their own eternal joy. Some, we regret to say, have remained, to all appearance, indifferent and careless as to their condition; and, as in like circumstances, such persons are usually hardened, so we fear in regard to those of whom we now speak, that they will be the worse for neglecting their present privileges. Still, it is our belief, that the students of this class have been much restrained from sinful courses, by the general seriousness pervading the College. After saying thus much, it can be scarcely necessary for me too add, that the order of the College during the present session has been good, and that there has been but little call for exercise of discipline. The attention to study has also been good. With the exception of the interruption of the regular recitations, on the afternoon of the 28th of February, there has been no interference whatever with the orders of the College, in consequence of the state of religious feeling among the students.

In accordance with the views expressed by the Board of Trustees, the course of religious instruction in the College has been extended, and it is now as follows, viz:

On the Lord's day there is preaching in the morning, in the College Chapel. In the afternoon all the classes recite from the sacred Scriptures. The lessons are taken alternately from the Old and New Testaments. Accompanying these exercises, explanations, practical remarks and prayer are made by the persons who hear these recitations. During the present year, Dr. Atwater has had the charge of the Junior and Freshman classes, and the President of the Senior and Sophomore classes, in the lessons from the Bible.

Prayer is offered every morning and evening in the College Chapel, with the exception of Sabbath evening, on which evening, as before mentioned, prayer is offered at the close of the Bible recitation. At morning prayer, a portion of Scripture is read; at evening prayer, a psalm or hymn is sung.

On Monday morning, the Senior, Sophomore, and Freshman classes recite from the Greek Testament. These recitations are heard by the Professor of Greek, the Adjunct Professor, and the Tutor in this department.

The Junior class recites a lesson taken from Dr. Alexander's *Evidences of Christianity*, or from Paley's *Natural Theology*, or from his *Horæ Paulinæ*. They do the same also on Saturday morning. The recitations on these subjects are heard by the President, who makes such comments as he deems proper.

These exercises, with the exception of the lessons in the *Horæ Paulinæ*, comprise the course of instruction heretofore given. In addition to these, the Seniors recite to the President of the College, on Butler's *Analogy*, the Sophomores on Dr. Hodge's *Way of Life*; and the Freshmen, on Dr. Coleman's *Biblical History and Geography*. During the present session, the Sophomore and Freshman classes have recited once a week, and the Senior class from once to twice a week, on the subjects just mentioned. The study of the "*Way of Life*," this session, was very opportune; several of the students under serious impressions having derived much valuable instruction from it—and the very instruction they needed.

It is my purpose, next year, to make some slight change as to the times these several works shall be made subjects of study; but, in other respects, to regard the present course of religious instruction as the established one for this institution.

That the clerical members of the Faculty should take a lively interest in the religious instruction and welfare of the student is what we might all expect from sincere men. But it is not so generally the case, that laymen and men of science, of the standing of our Professors, regard the religious interests of men as their highest interests, and do all their power, by precept and example, to imbue the minds of their pupils with a reverence for the teachings of revelation. I regard it as a happy circumstance for the youth of our College, that, in matters of science, they are under the tuition of able men, who regard science as the handmaid of religion, and in all respects to be subservient to her.

Permit me, in closing this Report on the State of the Col-

lege, to express our great obligations to Almighty God, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for his grace and goodness, vouchsafed to us and to the youth of our charge, during the present session, as seen in the general good health, good order, attention to study, and especially in the outpouring of his spirit, and in the hopeful conversion of a large number of our youth.

To His holy name be praise evermore.

JOHN MACLEAN,
President of the College.

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